

**Mississippi River Basin Panel (MRBP)
on Aquatic Nuisance Species**

**Hyatt Regency Hotel
Wichita, KS
September 8, 2005**

Assignments/Action Items Summary

Research and Risk Committee

- Complete work on an expert data base and data base of current research projects.
- Develop and post a form on our web site for posting of information on ANS research projects.
- Request information on research projects being conducted by those persons on the MRBP mailing list.
- Plan and conduct joint workshop on Risk Assessment with the Western Regional and Gulf States panels.
- Submit research priorities to Dorn Carlson (NOAA)

Prevention and Control Committee

- Complete work on a matrix listing each species, the state where it occurs, its rank of importance, its distribution, and ease of control.
- Complete work on a matrix of State ANS program contacts, and a data base of agencies which regulate water permits, herbicide treatments, etc. in the states.
- Continue to review and provide input to the Asian Carp Work Group's (ACWG) Asian Carp Management and Control Plan.
- Complete work on recommendations on ANS marketing and harvesting strategies.
- Complete work on a Committee position on species screening and clean species lists.

Information and Education Committee.

- Complete work on the Hitchhikers brochure and post on the MRBP Web Page.
- Complete work on the list of state brochures, etc. and post on the MRBP Web Page
- Complete work on the spread sheet of Threatened & Endangered species and post on the MRBP Web Page
- Complete work on the spread sheet of prohibited species and post on the MRBP Web Page.
- Reprint the hitchhikers brochure.
- Sponsor a mail survey of registered boaters to evaluate knowledge of ANS and where they get their info as a gauge of how information is getting out and to streamline future mailings.
- Complete work on and print an MRBP ANS field guide.
- Continue to discuss development of a basin ANS poster.
- Develop an information page for schools regarding use and how to dispose of ANS critters used in classrooms.

Executive Board

- Draft a plan to pass the chairmanship among the sub basins and for rotation of Committee chairs.

- Ensure member attendance at various ANSTF committee meetings.

Panel Actions

- Unanimous support was given for the MRBP to become an affiliate of the *Habitattitude* program.
- Unanimous support was given by the Panel in support of the evaluation of technologies to control populations or control the spread of Asian carp in large river systems.

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DRAFT Minutes

Chairman Jay Rendall (MN) called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. Earl Chilton, the new panel member from Texas introduced himself.

Rendall noted that the last Panel meeting was held in Columbia, MO in conjunction with the Aquatic Nuisance Species Task Force (ANSTF) meeting in order for us to familiarize the Task Force with ANS issues in the middle of the U.S. He said that Task Force members were extremely happy to meet with us, and feedback from the event was that they were very pleased with our presentations and the progress of our Panel. He said at that meeting we continued committee work and we want to continue to do that today. Copies of the minutes of that meeting were made available by Coordinator Rasmussen via email, and any comments on those minutes should be sent to him.

Vice Chairman Mike Hoff (FWS) said that he would substitute for Cindy Kolar this a.m. as chair of the Research and Risk Assessment Committee. He said all of the committees need to begin development of their 2006 Work Plans, and then later on we will have our business meeting. He said that Marshall Meyers (PIJAC) will brief us on the formal partnership of the *Habitattitude* project, but that the meat of the morning's meeting will be dedicated to development of our 2006 work plans.

Rendall said that we also need to talk about our process for funding activities, and that we will review actions of the Panel since our last meeting. He said that the Executive Board has had some conference calls in between meetings, and that we decided that we did not need a spring meeting this year because our committees needed more time to develop their work plans. He said that we finished our barrier recommendations, and submitted them to the ANSTF. He said we hope that our barrier position will help to prevent the spread of Asian carp. He noted that several Panel members have attended various meetings to keep our Panel represented, and that at some point we may ask others of you to attend such meetings in your geographic area. He also noted that we need to discuss an ANS concern that has recently arisen regarding the practice of Unitarian religious groups bringing water back to the U.S. from their travels, and in so doing possibly spreading ANS.

Rendall then instructed everyone to break into their separate Committees.

After meeting in Committee sessions for about two hours, the Panel reconvened with presentation of Committee updates.

Research and Risk Assessment Committee Report. Hoff presented the report and noted that about 6 members were present, and that they had reviewed their committee responsibilities, assignments and mission statement. He noted that a Risk Assessment Workshop had been planned and convened with the Gulf States Regional Panel. He also noted that several committee members participated in three different symposia (i.e., Southeast Division of the American Fisheries Society Asian carp Symposium, American Fisheries Society Asian carp symposium, and Midwest Division of the American Fisheries Society Asian Carp symposium). He said that work had been completed on the 2006 Work Plan, and that Committee Chairperson Cindy Kolar (USGS) has been working on an expert data base and data base of current

research projects. He said that they would also look into posting a form on our web site for people to post information on. He said that a request for such information would be sent to our mailing list, and a form would be provided for submission via the web. He said the objective of this work is to provide information on where to go for current research information. He said we need to annually update our database.

Hoff noted that we plan to conduct a second joint workshop on Risk Assessment within the next year. He said that a number of our panel members could not participate in this year's event, so we will likely send out a member survey to determine the best time to hold the workshop. He noted that approximately \$10,000 will likely be needed to fund the Workshop. This would include expenses for meeting facilities and travel of presenters. He projected another \$10,000 need for committee member travel to various events, and a \$20-30,000 need to support research work.

Rendall said that we also need to submit our research priority need to Dorn Carlson (NOAA). Hoff noted that this needs to be discussed by the whole panel. Carlson has stated that he will ask each of the regional panels to provide their preference for funding by NOAA. He will then allocate a certain amount of money (i.e. \$200,000) for each panel in support of their research needs.

Prevention and Control Committee Report. Committee Chairperson Kim Bogenschutz (IA) made the presentation. She said that the Committee has prioritized ANS issues for the Mississippi River Basin by sub basin. She said that a matrix had been prepared listing each species, the state where it occurs, its rank of importance, its distribution, and ease of control. She said that a rough draft is available. She said that the Committee has also developed a Matrix of State ANS program contacts, and a data base of agencies which regulate water permits, herbicide treatments, etc. in the states.

She said that the Committee has supported the Asian Carp Work Group's (ACWG) efforts to develop an Asian Carp Management and Control Plan. She said the impetus is to get the Plan into 2007 funding cycle. She said that the Committee has completed its recommendation on barriers, but is waiting on the ACWG report to develop its recommendations on ANS marketing and harvesting.

She said that the Committee supports development of clean lists as well as species screening. She noted that the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (IAFWA) has adopted a position on species screening, and that we will probably adapt their recommendations. She said that clean lists will continue to be discussed, and that dealing with pet traders, etc. gets to be very complex.

She said that the Committee supports passage of the National Aquatic Invasive Species Act (NAISA), but wonders how we can help the states support this. She said that Chairman Rendall had received a letter from house sponsors asking for support. She said we need to discuss this as well as the ballast water bill and the Invasive Species Council bill

She said that the Committee has no funding request at this point in time.

Information and Education Committee Report. Committee Chairman Steve Schainhost presented the report. He said that committee members had discussed their roles and responsibilities as well as products. He noted that the following products had been prepared:

- Hitchhikers brochure;
- List of state brochures, etc.
- Spread sheet of Threatened & Endangered species
- Spread sheet of prohibited species

He said that these will be posted on our web page after the tables are reviewed and corrected by the states.

He noted that future Committee activities include the following:

- Reprint hitchhikers brochure. Panel should support 5,000 copies per state with each state purchasing more as needed. \$14,000 requested.
- Coordinate updating of lists described above.
- Sponsor a mail survey of registered boaters to evaluate knowledge of ANS and where they get their info as a gauge of how information is getting out and to streamline future mailings. The Committee encourages most if not all basin states to do this. But before a budget request can be made we need to determine how many states will participate. MRBP would only pay for a portion of each state's survey
- Printing of the MRBP field guide was discussed, and a spring 2006 completion date was anticipated. The Panel could sponsor upwards of 2000 per member with a budget request of \$16,000. States could purchase more as desired.
- Development of a basin ANS poster was discussed, but the Committee did not come up with milestones at this time.
- Input to schools regarding use and release of ANS critters in their classrooms was discussed. The Committee agreed that an information page needs to be developed for sending out to schools with advice on how to handle ANS.

Rendall thanked the Committee Chairs for their presentations and then turned discussions to Old Business:

He said that NAISA sponsors are looking for support from panel states. He said that the Panel can't make a recommendation, but that each of the Panel members can. Ron Martin (WI) said that he had done a side by side comparison of the ballast water and NAISA bills, and that he doesn't know what is best from a strategy standpoint. He said that each bill is of interest to the states. Rendall said we need to work to pass the good points of both bills. He said we need to authorize the regional panels, we need to support the state management plans, and we need ballast water legislation. Bogenshutz said that you can go to the Thomas web site for a summary of the bills and the latest action, co sponsors, etc., so you can encourage your representatives to sponsor them if they are not already listed. Rendall said that since the Panel can't take a position on this, it's up to the states to take action. If all states contact their representatives it would make a big impact. Maybe Bogenshutz could report back on who has sponsored the bills so far, to see if momentum has been generated. This should be o.k. as long as we're not lobbying as a panel. Duane Chapman (USGS) said that the state chapters of the American Fisheries Society should send letters of support on this. He said that the Missouri Chapter is already doing this. Rendall said that we need to prevent fragmenting support of these bills, because then maybe neither will pass. Martin said that the core group who worked on this a couple of years ago needs to be reconvened on this. He said there is benefit to having both pieces of legislation moving at the same time.

Rendall then turned discussions to the Panel's election process. He said that there is not a high level of interest in the Panel leadership positions, but that he would like to encourage others to step forward. He said that some current chairs are getting burned out and need replacement. He said the positions were supposed to be for one year and then we would have future elections. Rasmussen discussed the election process and provided handouts. A lengthy discussion ensued, and then Tom Flatt (IN) asked if Rendall would consider nominating someone for Vice Chair and then staying on for another year. Martin said we were better off just holding an election. Rendall said that Rasmussen, Hoff and he will try to figure out a way to pass the chairmanship among the sub basins. Bogenshutz then asked about committee chairs. Rendall said that we would discuss this at the Executive Board. Rendall said we also need to have a representative from the Panel on every ANSTF committee. If interested in being on any of these committees, members should contact either Rendall or Rasmussen. Meyers noted that a new ANSTF committee has formed on volunteer monitoring programs that would provide input to Pam Fuller at

Gainesville, but that committee only wants to work by email. He said it was a hybrid that popped up to identify monitoring programs around the country.

Marilyn O'Leary (Louisiana Seagrass) provided an update on SARP. O'Leary said that she asked for time on the agenda so that everyone understands what SARP is. She said that she is working with all of the states in the Southeast to develop State management plans. She said that all members of the Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies are eligible. She said that SARP is a grass roots group that started with the Fish and Wildlife agencies within those states. She said that we have an aquatic resource to take care of, and none of us have enough dollars to go around, so we have to get on the same page. She said that a Memorandum of Understanding has been signed and that every state kicked in dollars to work together. She said the primary goal is to develop a long term living partnership for long term maintenance and sustainability. She said that six focus areas were identified and that ANS is one of those. She said that SARP has sought out grants to support their work, and that the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies provided a grant channeled through SARP that supports her job. She said that SARP has also applied for funds for a full time coordinator. She said that position will start out with a habitat group and then become an overall SARP coordinator. She said that HACCP training for ANS will be provided in all states. She said that SARP is there to work with the Panel, and is trying real hard to work with the aquatic resource, not just in our own little world. She said that SARP wants to start similar partnerships in other FWS regions to get more and more cooperation.

Rendall then discussed the Unitarian concern. He said that the Unitarians "*Gathering of Waters*" program involves gathering water from all over the world and bringing it back to the U.S. and mixing them all together. He said that they may or may not be boiling it. He said that there are obvious disease as well as ANS species issues of concern here. Chris Dionigi (ANSTF) said it wasn't that big a deal, but Rendall is still concerned about this practice. The lady who contacted him regarding this was sure that care was not being taken with this water all of the time. Chapman said this is not without risk. It may be a bigger issue with cholera than with ANS issues, but they should certainly be told to boil or sterilized this water. Otherwise it doesn't make sense to do this. Rendall said it may not be a big issue, but it magnifies at the national level, and he is concerned that the ANSTF didn't take this too seriously, but he is not sure what action we should take. Meyers said that he was amazed that this is being done. O'Leary said that this is a politically sensitive thing, and that it may be more challenging and difficult than we should face now. Bogenschutz wondered why the ANSTF wasn't concerned about the pathway issue, and maybe we need to remind them that this is a pathway. Rendall said that this is someone from the church coming to us. Flatt said that this is more of a human health issue, and suggested turning it over to the health agencies. Meyers said this is a sensitivity issue like the live Asian carp issue. It's a public health issue that is difficult for us to address.

Meyers then provided an update on the *Habitattitude* Partnership. He said that most of our members are familiar with this project. He said that the project is a partnership between Seagrass, the pet industry, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to launch a consumer education program on the responsible use and disposal of pets. He said it took 6 months for K-Mart to get bags, and that a mailing would be made to pet owners in October. He said that information would be provided with starter kits for aquariums and that do's and don'ts on water gardening would be stressed. He said that the Koi people are writing a manual on this. He said many people know that it's illegal to release fish, 86% feel that a good educational message will stop illegal releases, and 90% agree with the *Habitattitude* message. It is a simple, clean and clear message. He said that other supporters include the U.S. Coast Guard; U.S. EPA; U.S. Department of the Interior; U.S. Forest Service; NOAA; a number of states; academics; the Gulf, Northeast and Western panels. He said that we are constantly trying to expand the partnership.

Hoff wondered what the benefits are of Panel support. Meyers said we're trying to get as many media as

possible to distribute the message. He said we need volunteers to speak to schools, etc. He said we provide a lot of media materials. He said that a major federal department simply banning species really doesn't work - enforcement doesn't work; we need to change behavior through education. Rendall wondered if we can use *Habitattitude* in our field guide. Meyers said we have a brand user agreement that goes along with *Habitattitude*. Some artwork is designed, and you just add your logo. Also, we ask that you give us feedback as to what is being done. We can adjust the logo (colors, size, etc.) to adapt it to most needs. A panel will review and judge your use.

Hoff said we need a motion on this. Steve Shultz (IL) moved that the MRBP offer our full support as an affiliate of *Habitattitude*. Hoff seconded the motion. It was given unanimous support from the members present.

Hoff said that we need to address the Seagrant funding RFP. This would enable dollars to fund research on panel preferences. He said that NOAA has the responsibility of working on the coasts and Great Lakes, but that they don't consider the rivers as coasts, so we need to match our preferences with their needs. He said that Asian carp can invade the Great Lakes despite barriers, also Asian carp can invade via bait buckets, so a good recommendation might be to suggest NOAA support research that would enable development of barriers for containment of Asian carp. This would meet both NOAA and our priorities. Technology could be used inland as well as to protect the Great Lakes. They could evaluate technologies to control populations or control the spread of Asian carp in large river systems. O'leary said we need research on any type of control, so we shouldn't limit the RFP. Hoff agreed. Kolar suggested that we might ask them to support a Risk Assessment Workshop, but Hoff felt we are o.k. there.

Rendall asked if everyone would support the evaluation of technologies to control populations or control the spread of Asian carp in large river systems. Unanimous support of the members present was given.

Rendall said that with regard to the MRBP spending process, RFPs will be sent out for comment via email. No response to the mailing will be taken as support. He said that the Executive Board will recommend what the Panel should fund.

With regard to future meetings, O'Leary suggested that we might consider video conferencing option. Rasmussen said that he would poll the entire membership via email on this issue.

The meeting adjourned at 12:00 a.m.

**Mississippi River Basin Panel (MRBP) on Aquatic Nuisance Species (ANS)
Meeting No. 4
Attendance List**

Wichita, KS
September 8, 2005

Valerie Barko	Missouri Dept. of Conservation	valerie.barko@mdc.mo.gov
Marilyn Barrett-Oleary	Louisiana Sea Grant	moleary@lsu.edu
Amy Benson	USGS-Gainesville, FL	amy_benson@usgs.gov
Kim Bogenschutz	Iowa Dept. of Natural Resources	kim.bogenschutz@dnr.state.ia.us
Jeff Boxrucker	Oklahoma Dept. of Wildl. Conservation	jboxrucker@odwc.state.ok.us
Gerry Buynak	Kentucky Dept. of Fish & Wildl.	gerard.buynak@ky.gov
Duane Chapman	USGS - CERC - Columbia	duane_chapman@usgs.gov
Earl Chilton	Texas Parks and Wildl. Dept.	earl.chilton@tpwd.state.tx.us
Tom Flatt	Indiana Div. of Fish and Wildlife	tflatt@dnr.in.gov
Donald George	Kansas Dept. of Wildlife and Parks	dongn@wp.state.ks.us
Jason Goeckler	Kansas Dept. of Wildlife and Parks	jason@wp.state.ks.us
Michael Hoff	USFWS - Fort Snelling, MN	michael_hoff@fws.gov
Frank Jernejcic	West Virginia Div. of Nat. Resources	frankjernejcic@wvdnr.gov
Doug Keller	Indiana Div. of Fish and Wildlife	dkeller@dnr.in.gov
Billie L. Kerans	Montana State University	bkerans@montana.edu
Robin Knox	Colorado Division of Wildlife	robin.knox@state.co.us
Cindy Kolar	USGS-UMESC - La Crosse	ckolar@usgs.gov
Everett Laney	USACE - Tulsa	everett.laney@usace.army.mil
Scott G. Longman	Louisiana Dept. of Wildl. and Fisheries	slongman@wlf.louisiana.gov
Ron Martin	Wisconsin Dept. of Natural Resources	martir@dnr.state.wi.us
Marshall Meyers	PIJAC	mmeyers@pijac.org
Tom Mosher	Kansas Dept. of Wildlife and Parks	tomm@wp.state.ks.us
Jessica Mounts	Kansas Dept. of Wildlife and Parks	jessicam@wp.state.ks.us
John Navarro	Ohio Dept. of Natural Resources	john.navarro@dnr.state.oh.us
Tina Proctor	USFWS - Lakewood, CO	bettina_proctor@fws.gov
Jerry Rasmussen	MICRA	ijrivers@aol.com
Jay Rendall	Minnesota Dept. of Natural Resources	jay.rendall@dnr.state.mn.us
Eileen Ryce	Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks	eryce@state.mt.us
Steve Schainost	Nebraska Game & Parks	schainost@ngpc.state.ne.us
Lynn Schlueter	North Dakota Game & Fish Dept.	lschluet.state.nd.us
Steve Shults	Illinois Dept. of Natural Resources	sshults@dnrmail.state.il.us
Louie Thompson	Catfish Farmers of America	TFisheries@aol.com
Erin Williams	USFWS - Arlington, VA	erin_williams@fws.gov
Bobby Wilson	Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency	bobby.wilson@state.tn.us